

1. A method of providing user options in operation of a video system, comprising:

displaying an image on a display screen, the image being associated with a current one of a plurality of operational contexts;

detecting actuation of a pop-up option palette control; and

upon detecting actuation of the pop-up option palette control, overlaying the image on the display screen with a pop-up option palette displaying a plurality of selectable user options, the options having functions associated with the current operational context.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context is selected from the plurality of operational contexts comprising at least two of the following: a home context, a TV context, an Email context, an events context, a settings & tips context, a movies context, an online context, a shortcut to services context, a program guide context and a favorites context.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein one of the user selectable options has a function of providing help for the current operational context.

1 4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
2 comprises one of a home context, a program guide context, a TV context, an Email
3 context; and wherein the user selectable options provide at least the functions of
4 adding a current channel to a favorites list, printing to a printer, and providing a
5 shortcut to services.

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7 5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
8 comprises one of a settings & tips context and an events context; and wherein the
9 user selectable options provide at least the functions of providing a shortcut to
10 services and printing to a printer.

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12 6. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
13 comprises a movies context; and wherein the user selectable options provide at
14 least the functions of playing a movie, rewinding a movie, forwarding a movie and
15 stopping the functions of playing, rewinding and forwarding.

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17 7. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
18 comprises an online context; and wherein the user selectable options provide at
19 least the functions of adding a page to a favorites list and initiating a keyword
20 search.

1 8. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
2 comprises a shortcut to services context; and wherein the user selectable options
3 provide at least the function of shifting to another available operational context.

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5 9. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
6 comprises a shortcut to services context; and wherein the user selectable options
7 provide at least the function of shifting to another available operational context.

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9 10. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
10 comprises a settings & tips context; and wherein the user selectable options
11 provide at least the function of showing the user operational tips.

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13 11. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
14 comprises a settings & tips context; and wherein the user selectable options
15 provide at least the function of permitting the user to change operational settings.

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17 12. The method according to claim 1, wherein the current operational context
18 comprises a favorites context; and wherein the user selectable options provide at
19 least the functions of choosing a group of favorites, moving to a previous favorites
20 group, moving to a next favorites group, changing favorites and adding a channel
21 to a favorites group.

1 13. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
2 detecting a subsequent actuation of the pop-up option palette control; and
3 upon detecting the subsequent actuation of the pop-up option palette control,
4 removing the overlaying the image from the display screen.

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1 14. A storage media storing instructions which, when executed on a
2 programmed processor, carry out the steps of:

3 displaying an image on a display screen, the image being associated with
4 a current one of a plurality of operational contexts;

5 detecting actuation of a pop-up option palette control; and

6 upon detecting actuation of the pop-up option palette control, overlaying the
7 image on the display screen with a pop-up option palette displaying a plurality of
8 selectable user options, the options having functions associated with the current
9 operational context.

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11 15. The storage media according to claim 14, wherein the current operational
12 context is selected from the plurality of operational contexts comprising at least two
13 of the following: a home context, a TV context, an Email context, an events context,
14 a settings & tips context, a movies context, an online context, a shortcut to services
15 context, a program guide context and a favorites context.

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17 16. The storage media according to claim 14, further comprising: detecting a
18 subsequent actuation of the pop-up option palette control; and upon detecting the
19 subsequent actuation of the pop-up option palette control, removing the overlaying
20 image from the display screen.

1 17. A set-top box, comprising:
2 a programmed processor;
3 a memory device storing an operating system, a browser program and a
4 pop-up option palette program to operate on the programmed processor;
5 means for displaying an image on a video display, the image being
6 associated with one of a plurality of operational contexts;
7 means for receiving user commands;
8 and wherein the pop-up option palette program operates to carry out the
9 process of:

10 detecting receipt of a pop-up option palette command; and
11 upon detecting receipt of the pop-up option palette command, overlaying the
12 image on the display screen with a pop-up option palette displaying a plurality of
13 selectable user options, the options having functions associated with the current
14 operational context.

16 18. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
17 context is selected from the plurality of operational contexts comprising at least two
18 of the following: a home context, a TV context, an Email context, an events context,
19 a settings & tips context, a movies context, an online context, a shortcut to services
20 context, a program guide context and a favorites context.

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1 19. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein one of the user selectable
2 options has a function of providing help for the current operational context.

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4 20. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
5 context comprises one of a home context, a program guide context, a TV context,
6 an Email context; and wherein the user selectable options provide at least the
7 functions of adding a current channel to a favorites list, printing to a printer, and
8 providing a shortcut to services.

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10 21. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
11 context comprises one of a settings & tips context and an events context; and
12 wherein the user selectable options provide at least the functions of providing a
13 shortcut to services and printing to a printer.

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15 22. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
16 context comprises a movies context; and wherein the user selectable options
17 provide at least the functions of playing a movie, rewinding a movie, forwarding a
18 movie and stopping the functions of playing, rewinding and forwarding.

1 23. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
2 context comprises an online context; and wherein the user selectable options
3 provide at least the functions of adding a page to a favorites list and initiating a
4 keyword search.

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6 24. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
7 context comprises a shortcut to services context; and wherein the user selectable
8 options provide at least the function of shifting to another available operational
9 context.

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11 25. The set-top box according to claim 24, wherein the current operational
12 context comprises a shortcut to services context; and wherein the user selectable
13 options provide at least the function of shifting to another available operational
14 context.

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16 26. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
17 context comprises a settings & tips context; and wherein the user selectable
18 options provide at least the function of showing the user operational tips.

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1 27. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
2 context comprises a settings & tips context; and wherein the user selectable
3 options provide at least the function of permitting the user to change operational
4 settings.

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6 28. The set-top box according to claim 17, wherein the current operational
7 context comprises a favorites context; and wherein the user selectable options
8 provide at least the functions of choosing a group of favorites, moving to a previous
9 favorites group, moving to a next favorites group, changing favorites and adding a
10 channel to a favorites group.

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12 29. The set-top box according to claim 17, further comprising:
13 detecting a subsequent receipt of the pop-up option palette command; and
14 upon detecting the subsequent receipt of the pop-up option palette
15 command, removing the overlaying image from the display screen.

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1 30. A set-top box, comprising:
2 a programmed processor;
3 a memory device storing an operating system, a browser program and a
4 pop-up option palette program to operate on the programmed processor;
5 means for displaying an image on a video display, the image being
6 associated with one of a plurality of operational contexts;
7 means for receiving user commands;
8 and wherein the pop-up option palette program operates to carry out the
9 process of:
10 detecting receipt of a pop-up option palette command;
11 upon detecting receipt of the pop-up option palette command,
12 overlaying the image on the display screen with a pop-up option palette
13 displaying a plurality of selectable user options, the options having functions
14 associated with the current operational context;
15 wherein the current operational context is selected from the plurality
16 of operational contexts comprising at least a home context, a TV context, an
17 Email context, an events context, a settings & tips context, a movies context,
18 an online context, a shortcut to services context, a program guide context
19 and a favorites context;
20 wherein each of the plurality of user selectable options has a function
21 of providing help for the current operational context;

1 wherein if the current operational context comprises one of a home
2 context, a program guide context, a TV context, and an Email context; then
3 the user selectable options provide at least the functions of adding a current
4 channel to a favorites list, printing to a printer, and providing a shortcut to
5 services;

6 wherein if the current operational context comprises one of a settings
7 & tips context and an events context; then the user selectable options
8 provide at least the functions of providing a shortcut to services and printing
9 to a printer;

10 wherein if the current operational context comprises a movies context;
11 then the user selectable options provide at least the functions of playing a
12 movie, rewinding a movie, forwarding a movie and stopping the functions of
13 playing, rewinding and forwarding;

14 wherein if the current operational context comprises an online
15 context; then the user selectable options provide at least the functions of
16 adding a page to a favorites list and initiating a keyword search;

17 wherein if the current operational context comprises a shortcut to
18 services context; then user selectable options provide at least the function
19 of shifting to another available operational context;

20 wherein if the current operational context comprises a shortcut to
21 services context; then the user selectable options provide at least the
22 function of shifting to another available operational context;

1 wherein if the current operational context comprises a settings & tips
2 context; then the user selectable options provide at least the functions of
3 showing the user operational tips and permitting the user to change
4 operational settings; and

5 wherein if the current operational context comprises a favorites
6 context; then the user selectable options provide at least the functions of
7 choosing a group of favorites, moving to a previous favorites group, moving
8 to a next favorites group, changing favorites and adding a channel to a
9 favorites group;

10 detecting a subsequent receipt of the pop-up option palette command; and
11 upon detecting the subsequent receipt of the pop-up option palette
12 command, removing the overlaying the image from the display screen.

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